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ABSTRACT

The Getzels and Guba social systems model was used to develop hypotheses for obtaining knowledge concerning: 1) "real" leadership behavior of department chairmen as described by themselves and faculty; 2) "ideal" leadership behavior of chairmen as described by themselves, deans, and faculty; and 3) responsibility, authority and delegation behaviors reported by deans and chairmen. Normative data about the selection, administrative role, tenure, leadership training, and experience of incumbent chairmen were also gathered. Respondents included 52 deans, 118 chairmen and 161 faculty at 17 state institutions. The instruments used were the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire, the Responsibility, Authority, and Delegation Scales, and introductory questions. Conclusions and recommendations are presented. (AF)

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LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRMEN IN SELECTED STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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Purpose

The Getzels and Guba social systems model was used to develop hypotheses for obtaining knowledge concerning: (1) the "real" leadership behavior of chairmen as described by themselves and faculty, (2) the "ideal" leadership behavior of chairmen as described by deans, themselves, and faculty, and (3) responsibility, authority, and delegation behaviors reported by deans and chairmen. Normative data about the selection, administrative role, tenure, leadership training, and experience of incumbent chairmen were also gathered.

Procedure

Personnel in Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, and Education in 17 state institutions of higher education were solicited as respondents. The sample included 331 respondents: 52 deans, 118 chairmen, and 161 faculty.

The instruments used were the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ), the Responsibility, Authority, and Delegation Scales (RAD), and introductory questions.

Statistical treatment included one way analysis of variance, Chi square, and Pearson r. Quadrant analysis was used to relate the LBDQ data directly to the dimensions of the theoretical model.

Major Results

Chairmen score themselves significantly higher (.01) on both Real behaviors than does the faculty. The faculty expects significantly more (.01) Consideration from the Ideal chairmen than deans expect. Conversely, deans expect more Initiating Structure from the Ideal chairmen than does the faculty. Chairmen would display significantly more (.05) Ideal-Initiating Structure than the faculty desires but Ideal-Consideration was viewed similarly by both groups.

Chairmen with large departments (12 or above) scored lower (.05) on Real and Ideal leader behavior than those with small departments. Neither institutional size, type of college, nor faculty rank were factors in reported leader behaviors. However, as groups, personnel in the Colleges of Business Administration expect significantly more (.01) Ideal-Initiating Structure from chairmen than do personnel in the other colleges. Personnel in the Colleges of Education expect less Ideal-Initiating Structure than those in the other colleges.

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Significant differences (.01 and .05) were found on leader behavior by frequency of formal and informal contact with chairmen and deans, prior administrative experience of chairmen, and belief in the efficacy of administrative training.

Deans and chairmen agree that the chairmen's role is becoming more administrative in nature and will become more important in the future. Also, 68% of the deans and 62% of the chairmen believe that chairmen should have administrative training while 70% of the deans and 57% of the chairmen oppose rotational chairmanships.

Conclusions

The faculty desires to receive more leadership on both dimensions than they presently receive. Also, chairmen believe that they should display more leader behavior than they presently do. The deans want chairmen to display more leader behavior but less than the faculty desires, thus placing the chairmen in a conflict position.

All three groups place the chairman's Ideal leadership style in that area of the Transactional dimension that is closer to the Idiographic than the Nomothetic dimension. This is congruent with the evolutionary trend in leadership and organizational theory and the historical development of the departmental structure.

Responsibility, Authority, and Delegation are functions of institutional size. These functions are vested in a superior position in small institutions (below 5,000) and in those positions in institutions of 10,000 - 19,999.

The chairmen with large departments have many tasks of an impersonal nature which decreases the displayed leader behavior that is apparent to the faculty.

The quadrant analysis technique seems to be a viable method for analyzing leader behavior and leadership style on the dimensions of the social systems model.

Major Recommendations

Chairmen should analyze their leader behavior to determine why they are not exerting as much leadership as expected by themselves, deans, and faculty. They should delegate more routine tasks and free themselves for non-routine problems. Also, because Consideration was deemed more important than Initiating Structure, pre and in-service training in a human relations approach to attaining institutional goals should be given chairmen and department members.

The goals of the institution, colleges, and departments should be spelled out in behavioral terms to provide a clearer frame of reference for the determination of specific leader behaviors and styles needed to attain those goals. The impact of organizational character and structure on leader behavior should be studied and some thought given to the identification and training of those who have administrative potential and would find that endeavor satisfying.

Research needs to be done to identify criteria of effectiveness in terms of the behavioral, organizational goals and to identify leadership styles that are most closely related to the effectiveness of attaining those goals.